UNITY

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION

Responsible Freedom - *E. Burdette Backus*

Prerequisites of the New Religious Leader - - - - - - - - *Leo Hirsch*

Human Nature: Stumbling Block or Salvation? - - - *Stanton A. Coblentz*

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The Field

"The world is my country, to do good is my Religion."

Cooperative Centennial Congress

Speaking to the largest cooperative congress in the history of the American cooperative movement and reporting on the greatest growth of cooperatives in any two-year period, Murray D. Lincoln, President of The Cooperative League of the USA, said "Our test flight is over. We must put cooperatives into mass production."

Summarizing co-op progress Mr. Lincoln declared:

> We have defeated monopoly on the economic battlefront. We have returned ownership of property to the common man. We have gotten more goods to more people at less cost. We have pointed the way to the end of consumer exploitation. We have demonstrated our ability to stimulate purchasing power, the priceless ingredient of a prosperous economy. And we have, by the very nature of our enterprise, sharpened an awareness of the democratic ideals which bulwark our American way of life. . . .

A thousand cheering delegates at the Cooperative Centennial Congress at the Hotel Morrison, Chicago, looked with pride to achievements of the cooperatives in breaking monopoly practices in the fertilizer industry; in bringing down the price on feeds, seeds, and petroleum products to the farm and city consumer; in reaching back into production by the purchase of $20,000,000 worth of mills, factories, and refineries in the past biennium; and the savings of an estimated $50,000,000 to co-op members on purchases made during the last year, thereby increasing the purchasing power of their consumer members.

Mr. Lincoln asked the delegates to undertake a vastly expanded national program of education which will make America aware that there is a better alternative to the erroneously called "free enterprise" system or more government regulation, and that the alternative is the cooperative alternative. He said:

> It is not enough to wait until people find out about cooperation. We must tell them. . . We must use, and fight for the right to use, every medium used by those who compete for the public mind. . . . The day for shy and self-conscious cooperatives is past.

In his presidential address to the 14th Biennial Congress of The Cooperative League, Mr. Lincoln called for a more closely integrated cooperative movement, an expansion of the recently organized financial organization and insurance cooperatives; continued expansion into the field of cooperative production, and an increasing responsibility on the part of the cooperative movement for community welfare on a town and township, county, state, and national basis.

Mr. Lincoln concluded:

> Only by cooperative expansion can we stop the trend toward statism. The degree of freedom which people in this country will experience in time will be in direct proportion to what they are able and willing to do for themselves.

UNITY

"He Hath Made of One All Nations of Men"

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Editorial Comments

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

I

As the war in Europe rushes to its fierce climax, the tides of vengeance and hate begin to flow in a veritable torrent. As by tempestuous winds, these tides are lashed by propaganda. Atrocity stories are now being released in a veritable flood—we have had more horrors in the last two months than in the whole war hitherto! Of course, it is easy to find horrors in this war, which is the most horrible as well as destructive of all time; and it is easy to understand the instincts of revenge that well up in the human heart. But this is not going to get us anywhere in the business of making a peace that will endure. Another spirit must reign if ever this sad old world is to be established in unity. The *Friends Intelligencer* recognizes this fact in quoting from a remarkable article in the May-June issue of a little-known magazine, *Indian Truth*. In this article, the author, Ella C. Deloria, points out that in the old days there were two kinds of vengeance practiced by the Sioux Indians against murderers. In one case, the murderer was killed outright by relatives of the victim, or else was subjected to such severe physical ordeals of torture that the chances of survival were so small that anyone who did survive was deemed exonerated by the Supernatural and allowed to go free. Referring to the other case, Miss Deloria writes:

> Still another and radically different treatment of murderers was rarely applied because it was not easy for the many bereaved relatives to agree to it. They adopted the murderer, in his victim's stead, by giving him gifts in token of their purpose and publicly pledging themselves to show him thereafter the same loyalty and devotion they formerly bestowed on their dead kinsman. This was indeed the hard way to retaliate—but also the most effective. For when they smoked the peace pipe with the murderer, they did so with the understanding that both their resentment and his guilt were thereby purged away forever. It is said that such a man generally made an even better relative than many natural relatives, because he had been redeemed at such a great cost.

It looks now as though in our treatment, not only of the war criminals but of the German people themselves, we were bent on following in principle the first form of vengeance and not the second. After all, it is hardly to be expected that civilized people should go very far in imitation of savages! But in the case of the Germans, if not in that of their Nazi overlords, this thing is certain—that the second form of "vengeance," if we would call it such, must be followed in spirit, if our world is to be saved from another and final war. The Germans must be restored to the family of nations—recognized as kinsmen in the high purposes of humanity. In some great organization of mankind—a league, or federation, or what not—friends and foes must together "smoke the peace pipe," and therewith understand in mutual accord that "both their resentment and their guilt [are] thereby purged away forever." This is what we failed to do in the so-called peacemaking that followed the last war, and the present war was the result. If we fail again, as signs now indicate, then is our doom indeed sealed.

II

Amid all the propaganda stuff being published these days about the general hellishness of the Germans, and of our need to exterminate or at least hopelessly cripple them if we are ever to have any peace upon this planet, it pleased me immensely to read recently in the Boston *Herald* an Associated Press dispatch, signed by Edward D. Ball "with the Americans in Normandy," telling a story of three chaplains on the western front. This dispatch, by the way, was "delayed" by the censors for a month! The three American chaplains in question were bravely seeking out the wounded under fire, when there came "a spontaneous, unofficial cessation of hostilities in this bloody sector for three hours." It seems that "the enemy" had seen these gallant chaplains and "been impressed by the bravery of these men of the cloth." So they stopped shooting, and soon, says the correspondent, "guns on both sides fell silent." During this armistice, "the Germans came out and met the chaplains . . . and directed the litter-bearers to our wounded. Through a German-speaking American, removal of the wounded was thus arranged. . . Within a few minutes after the chaplains reached an aid station, the death-like silence was broken over the battlefield. The Germans had started shooting again and the fight was on." This story, as told directly by Chaplain Joseph J. Esser, Roman Catholic, was set down by the Associated Press man, as follows:

> There was no request for an armistice. We were out there carrying on when Stohler came over to get me to give the Last Sacrament to a dying Catholic. I administered the Last

Sacrament and then Stohler and I decided to go further into the swamp and see if we would draw fire. There was none so we called back for litter-bearers and began picking up our wounded.

Meanwhile, Hamilton was picking up wounded with a party of American aid men farther down the line. They were hailed by a German who emerged from behind a machine-gun emplacement. The German directed them to a wounded American they had missed. While picking him up they came upon another man whose left leg had been shot away.

I do not wonder that this dispatch was held up by the censor, for it does not fit into the mass of propaganda at all! Note that it was the Germans who ceased fire. It was the Germans who came out and helped the Americans to find and minister to their wounded. And these heroic chaplains accepted this aid gratefully. And foe and friend thus together, moved by a common impulse of pity and respect, went about doing good upon that battlefield. If a peace of this kind, in such a spirit, can be arranged for three hours, why can it not be arranged in the same way for three days, or three months, or three years, or three centuries? If war can thus be stopped for a little time, why not for all time? What was possible in Normandy, while the fighting was actually going on, should be easily possible at the peace table after the fighting is over. What we need is to get rid of the madmen on both sides, and ask sane men to write the peace. Let the chaplains do it, and the common soldiers, instead of the politicians and stay-at-homes—and we would get a peace that would last!

III

It is interesting to watch the process by which Russia takes over one country after another in this war, and thus step by step extends her sway over the European continent. Jugoslavia was the first example of how it is done. When the Nazis invaded and conquered that country, heroic peasants took to the hills, and organized guerrilla warfare under the able command of General Mikhailovitch. This officer was recognized by his exiled King and by the allied nations. Such freedom as Jugoslavia still enjoyed was due to this gallant patriot and his band of fighters who would not surrender. Suddenly a new figure appears upon the scene. This is a man named Tito, not known before, and a group of followers called Partisans. These make trouble for Mikhailovitch, and there is civil war among Jugoslavs instead of a common fight against the enemy. In due course it is discovered that Tito is a Russian stooge and his followers are Communists. This is Stalin's government as opposed to the native government of the King. And now, thanks to Stalin's obduracy and sheer military power, Tito is in the ascendancy, with the more or less unwilling compliance of the Allies, and Jugoslavia wakes up to discover that she has been fighting against the Nazis all these years only to see the Soviets march in and take their place. The same thing is true of Poland. When this tortured land was overrun by the Nazis in 1939, there was a constitutional government in Warsaw. This government went into exile in London, as did the Dutch and Belgian governments the next year, it being understood, of course, that this government would return just as soon as the country was reconquered, just as the Dutch and Belgian governments in exile are doing now. But suddenly another Polish government appears—in Moscow! This government has the support of Stalin, and in due course will be established in office by Stalin's red armies which are on the scene of action. The meaning of this is plain! Russia is going to annex outright a good half of Poland, and the rest of the land she is going to put under the control of a puppet regime subservient to the Soviets. The same process is now being prepared for Germany, please note! Already a German committee [government] has appeared, and once the Russians have made their way to Berlin, it will be found that the new Germany is ready, and that it is Communist through and through. Finland, Latvia, Esthonia, Lithuania, Roumania, Bulgaria—these are only so many tidbits to be gathered up and consumed in much the same way. A delightful spectacle, is it not? Hitler overthrown at an enormous expenditure of blood and treasure, only to have Stalin march in and take his place! But perhaps we do not like it. Well in that case, why did we go to war?

IV

Everything about this universal military conscription bill now before Congress is "phony." The postponement of consideration of the bill until after election, for example! Neither party dares to handle the measure now. They know that the people would rise up in wrath against anybody who dared to advocate this compulsion of one year's military service upon our 18-year old youth in peacetime. But the newspaper correspondents tell us that, once the election is over, and either Republican or Democrat elected (it makes no difference which!), we will be astonished at the speed with which this new conscription legislation will be rushed through to enactment. Then the whole business is "phony" in relation to the peace. What are we fighting for if not to get rid of war—to establish a world in which the nations are safely to live at peace with one another? It is agreed that we are going to disarm our enemies, and so cripple them that they will never be able to lift their heads again. It is similarly agreed that we shall place the world in the all-powerful hands of Britain, America, Soviet Russia, and China, who will keep peace upon this earth forever. The logic of this complete peace-with-victory program is of course the lifting of the fear of war from all our hearts and the relief at last of the intolerable burden of armaments. But now we are told that this is not so at all! Our boys will be dead, our treasures spent, our enemies defeated—and we must still prepare for war! Nay, as

a result of this awful struggle, we must establish a militarism such as has never prevailed in this country in all its history. Our political leaders, in other words, take no stock in all this talk about peace. Having disposed of our enemies, we must prepare to fight—whom? Why it must be our allies, since these are the only great powers left. Which is a nice prospect for the future! But this military conscription law is fundamentally "phony" as a means of protecting ourselves against disaster. For its enactment will be a proclamation to all the world that we are getting ready for the next war, and a warning to all the nations that they had better do the same. This means that there will be no freedom from fear, but the old terror once again of competitive armaments. If anything can bring peace out of this war, it must be faith—a faith that we can establish and maintain the peace we pray for—and a willingness to run the risks implicit in such faith. Military conscription after this war would mean that we have no such faith, and propose to take no such risks. In other words, the old story of war and preparations for war! That is the reason why I say the whole thing is "phony" in relation to all our hopes.

V

Scott Nearing, in his monthly *World Events* newsletter, declares that "in the memory of the oldest American there had never been a day on which religious establishments were so intimately and so officially identified with a political episode as they were on this occasion." The "occasion" to which he refers was D-day, and the prayers in the churches on that day for the success of the invasion of France. It will probably be outdone on V-day, when the people acclaim the ending of the war against Germany. And let it be said that if the people must pour out their feelings on these occasions, it is infinitely better to do it in prayer-services in the churches than in orgies of celebration in the public streets. War prayers are mostly superstition of the worst description, but shouting, cheering, flag-waving and drinking are barbarism unashamed. When I read of the special police orders issued in anticipation of V-day, of the instructions given to fire departments, of store-keepers boarding up windows to save them from destruction, of restrictions placed upon saloons, night clubs and other places of dissipation, I feel a certain relief at the thought that there are some people who will want to go into the churches on this "occasion," to confess their sins and pray for peace upon the earth. But Scott Nearing does not have this spontaneous expression of public feeling in mind. What he denounces is the deliberate and official hitching up of the churches to the war effort. The churches as a whole have kept pretty much aloof from this effort, in fidelity to a religion that has no place for war. What more clever than for the government to take advantage of an occasion of profound public concern to seize upon religion and use it for war purposes? Stalin is doing this to perfection in Russia where he is buying the church with favors, as a man buys a prostitute with money. Roosevelt did the same when he led the nation in prayer on D-day—prayer for military victory, for increased production, for divine protection of the fighting men. This acquires "peculiar significance," says Professor Nearing, "when uttered by the Chief Executive of a nation that has maintained as one of its basic principles the separation of church and state." We take Professor Nearing seriously in this protest. He is calling attention to the precise point at which the churches may be betrayed in this war. If the government attempted to persecute the churches, to silence pacifist ministers, to order service flags and bond sales in the sanctuary, there would be resistance. The churches would never give way to tyranny. But to fawn upon the churches, and to ask for their prayers, and to seek their blessing, and to make the Chief Executive himself a minister of religion—this way danger lies. The prophets of old spoke not in obedience to Kings but in defiance of them. That is a pretty good tradition!

VI

The standard of oratory in this campaign has seemed the lowest ever. Perhaps this is because we have a consummate orator in the world today—Prime Minister Winston Churchill—who makes everybody else's utterances seem superficial, dull, and just plain ordinary. Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Dewey are excellent in their way, but they are accomplished radio talkers, not orators at all. Mr. Roosevelt's old-time magic is almost entirely gone—his voice and diction are as marvellous as ever, but he is now slow, heavy, and at times hesitant. Mr. Dewey is polished and precise, but like a carefully trained young man speaking a piece. In neither one of these two candidates is there that spontaneity, eloquence, and passionate flow of utterance which make great oratory. As for the lesser fry among the Republican and Democratic campaigners, the less said the better. Governor Bricker, candidate for Vice-President, is inexpressibly commonplace. Senator Truman, his rival, is pitiable as a speaker. Senators, representatives, governors—not a great or even good platform orator among them! Particularly irritating is the inability of many of these politicians to pronounce the English language. No language is more musical, more noble, when each word is given its true value, each sentence its appropriate cadence. But listen, and hear how the words are murdered! Words like "while," "wheel," "wheat," lose their "h's," and become "wile," "weel," "weat." "Duty" is almost invariably pronounced "dooty." "Government," a beautiful word, becomes "gover'ment," and "library"

"lib'ry," and "athletic" "athaletic." The pronunciation of the average broadcaster is impeccable as compared with that of most of these ignorant or careless political talkers. To all of which there is one notable exception—namely, the Socialist candidate, Norman Thomas! Here is a real orator—sincere, powerful, eloquent, and deeply moving. The radio is an influence destroying most public oratory today, and Mr. Thomas has used the radio constantly in recent years. But it has not spoiled him. He is today the same free, eloquent and convincing speaker he has always been. I have heard Norman Thomas in small rooms addressing small groups of people. I have heard him in an auditorium like Madison Square Garden in New York addressing a vast multitude of men and women—and always he sways his audience with passionate response. This Socialist leader will not win the election, but he already has his competitors soundly beaten in all that makes for character and conviction in public speech. Would that the American people had sense enough to recognize a great man when they see him!

Jottings

It is not difficult to forecast President Roosevelt's place in history. His long administration will be remembered as the period which witnessed the passing of the American Republic into the American Empire, just as Augustus' long reign is remembered as the period which witnessed the passing of the Roman Republic into the Roman Empire.

Hitler is now learning the lesson which Napoleon learned more than a century ago. Why did he not learn it on the pages of history instead of on the fields of battle? Must millions of men forever die in order to give tyrants an education?

A sign in a store window in New York:

"*Closing Out.* Military Merchandise. *Closing Out.*"

Is this a sign of the times?

A G. I. writes as follows from India:

"I've had the pleasure of seeing the Taj Mahal several times. It is quite beautiful."

We respectfully and confidently nominate this sentence for the Pulitzer prize for understatement.

If as many people had voted for Wendell Willkie when he ran for President as mourned for him when he died, he would have been elected by the largest majority in the nation's history.

October marked the 300th anniversary of the birth of William Penn—October 14th, 1644 (O.S.), October 24th, 1644 (N.S.). Penn was one of the earliest advocates of international peace (see his *Essay Towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe*), and the bravest exemplar of love as the law of life. In Pennsylvania he proved that a society can be secure without arms. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

Responsible Freedom

E. BURDETTE BACKUS

Freedom is one of the most precious words in the entire vocabulary of mankind, and rightly so, for it is the symbol which we employ to designate a condition which is indispensable to the full flowering of human life. Only when he is free can man be at his best. The historian Bury tells us that those periods in which civilization has risen to the greatest heights have been periods when the mind of man got free; this was true of ancient Greece in the heyday of its culture; it was true also in the Renaissance when, after the dark ages, the mind of man again burst its bonds and the modern world was born. There is a direct relation between freedom and great achievement; freedom provides the opportunity for men to develop and give to the world the best that there is in them.

Liberty is precious to all peoples, but to none more than to us of the United States, a nation "conceived in liberty." It is part of our very lifeblood, built into the whole structure of our being by our national history. We rejoice to call this the "land of the free." And now we are again "engaged in a great war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived . . . can long endure." The deep issue of this war is the preservation and extension of the principle of freedom; it is so supremely important to us that we are prepared to pay any price to secure it for ourselves and to share it with the rest of the world.

Liberty is generally beloved of men. It is particularly precious to the citizens of this nation; and in intensified form that love exists among us of the churches united in the Western Unitarian Conference. The principle of freedom is an essential ingredient of our religion. Back of us there lies a long history in which we have been working out the implications of that principle and establishing them firmly in our organized life as churches. May I remind you of the language of the first proclamation of the principle of religious tolerance written into the law of a western

nation. Under the influence of the eloquent plea of the Unitarian minister, Francis David, before the Diet of Torda in 1568, King John Sigusmund of Transylvania decreed:

> Preachers shall be allowed to preach the gospel everywhere, each according to his own understanding of it. If the community wishes to accept such teaching, well and good; if not, they shall not be compelled, but shall be allowed to keep the preachers they prefer. No one shall be made to suffer on account of his religion since faith is the gift of God.

From that early date down to the present time the history of Unitarianism shows a gradual growth in the understanding and acceptance of the consequences of the principle of freedom in religion. Dr. Earl Morse Wilbur, our foremost historian, at the conclusion of his book entitled *Our Unitarian Heritage,* devotes a brief paragraph to summarizing the inner meaning of the long story he has been unfolding. He says:

> It has not been merely a long attempt to substitute one set of doctrines for another. That has often been involved in it, it is true; but beneath all this has been something far deeper and more important. For if men are to change their beliefs from one age to another, as they get new light or discover new truth, their minds must be left free in their search, and not barred in this direction or that; nor can their new beliefs be shared with others unless there is also freedom of speech and press. Hence the first thing that has characterized this history has been its steady tendency toward perfect spiritual freedom. Unitarianism, then, has meant first of all religious freedom and escape from the bondage of creeds; and throughout their whole history Unitarians have steadfastly refused to set up any creed, even the shortest, as a test which must be passed by those who would join them.

This fundamental importance which we attach to freedom was affirmed anew in the proclamation issued at the 1943 May Meetings of the American Unitarian Association in Boston, under the title, "The Faith Behind Freedom." In this document it is stated: "As no man can be good enough to be the master of another, so no man can be wise enough to bind another in belief. Hence, we reject all orthodoxies and proclaim the Free and Universal Church." The very theme of this conference, "The Challenge of Freedom," is eloquent of the fact that I do not need to persuade you of the value of freedom; we are agreed upon that and will therefore devote our time to a consideration of the requirements which freedom lays upon us.

For though there can be no question that "the love of freedom is interwoven with every ligament of the human heart" it by no means follows that even Unitarians have recognized that the other side of the coin of freedom is responsibility, and that we cannot have the freedom which we covet unless we accept along with it the obligation to maintain it. The greatest enemies of freedom are not those which attack it from without, menacing as they are, but those which weaken and corrupt it from within. Its strength is to be found in the minds and hearts and souls of men who understand its requirements and are ready to meet them. Rightly has it been said that "he only earns his freedom and existence who daily conquers them anew."

This is an old truth and it has never been more clearly demonstrated than in the experience of the Apostle Paul. You will remember that he had been one of the strictest of the Jews, following their laws and religious regulations meticulously. But the time came when he found that they gave him the feeling of being in prison; they bound and hampered him so that he could not be his true self. He found release from this in conversion to the new religion of Jesus. No longer did he have to obey all the old, narrow, cramping regulations. He experienced an exhilarating sense of freedom. He proclaimed himself a free man. But he quickly discovered that freedom has its own laws, and we find him saying, "All things are lawful unto me; but not all things are profitable. . . . Yea, though I am free, I bring myself under bondage, that I may gain the more." He likens himself in his freedom to the athlete who watches his diet and disciplines his body in order that he may run the better.

This is the difficult lesson that we all have to learn. Freedom which is simply a negative thing, the absence of restraint, is not worth much. It gives us a certain amount of satisfaction such as the child experiences when the summer vacation arrives—and I would not belittle that. But the real value of freedom is not experienced until we go on to make it a positive thing by the use to which we put it. As Eduard Lindeman is wont to insist, it is not freedom *from,* but freedom *for* that is the important matter. We can use it like the criminal who gets out of jail only to renew his thefts, or we can use it like the man of character who commands the respect and admiration of all who know him. This requires self-discipline and above all it requires a purpose to the achievement of which freedom is but a condition, important only as it serves the end to be achieved. What matters supremely is the use we make of our freedom.

Because this is so vital let me amplify the point by means of a few illustrations.

Consider the case of the scientist: freedom is absolutely essential to the success of his work. If he is told in advance the conclusion at which he must arrive, he ceases to be a scientist. If he is subjected to the authority of the state, or the church, or even to the traditional views of science, he cannot do his task effectively. He must be free to go his own way and come to his own decisions. But how does he use this freedom?

The answer is obvious. He uses it for the purpose of getting at the truth, of arriving at a better understanding of some portion of the world of reality, of making some new discovery, or producing a new invention. And in order that he may serve this purpose, he has to subject his mind to a strict discipline. He is not free to believe that the moon is made of green cheese, or to advance any other equally fantastic hypothesis. He is free to sit down reverently before the facts and learn of them; he is free to bring these facts into relation with one another in accordance with the laws of thinking and a disciplined imagination. He must use his freedom in a highly responsible fashion, and it is only because scientists meet these requirements that they are able to make the tremendous contributions which they do to our knowledge and to our practical control over the forces of nature. The scientist says, with Paul: "Yea, though I am free, I bring myself under bondage, that I may gain the more."

We Unitarians insist on the same attitude toward religious beliefs; we are free, not that we may believe anything that fancy suggests to our minds, but, paradoxically enough, we demand that we shall be free to believe what we *must*—free to arrive at our personal credo on the basis of the evidence and the interpretation of that evidence which is required by the working of our minds. Sometimes the term "free thinkers" is used of us as a term of reproach. The late Mr. Mangasarian was accustomed to say that the term is more correctly applied to the orthodox, for they consider themselves free to believe certain doctrines despite evidence that conclusively proves them false.

Consider, for example, the story of Balaam's ass.

According to orthodox requirements the true believer accepts the story at its face value and believes that the ass carried on a conversation with Balaam, despite the fact that the overwhelming evidence is that the story is just an early bit of nature-faking on the par with Br'er Rabbit. Of course we shall have to acknowledge that in our experiences asses do talk, but it is always the two-legged, never the four-legged variety. This is a trivial example but the principle applies to the whole intellectual structure of religion. The kind of freedom to which we lay claim in religion is the responsible freedom which demands of us a discipline no less exacting than that of the scientist.

What is true of the intellectual aspects of religion is equally true of its moral judgments, the moral quality of our deeds. We are free not that we may indulge every impulse which arises within us, give vent to every feeling that sweeps over us. Humanity has long recognized that the man who does so is not really free, but rather the victim, the slave, of his passions and emotions. The true saint is he in whom these elemental drives are no whit less powerful than they are in other men, but he has disciplined them to the service of his best self, and in so doing has won a degree of freedom which lesser men never know.

What is the difference between the person who is emotionally free in the best sense and he who is inhibited, shy, unable to give expression to his feelings? The answer is that he is emotionally free who can trust his feelings and give them expression knowing that they will not give offense because the motive back of them is one of genuine good will, so that if offense does come the fault lies rather in him who takes it than in him who gives it. He is emotionally free who has been fortunate enough, and wise enough, to establish in the deep places of his personality an emotional pattern in which the outgoing feelings of love and affection are dominant, and such feelings of hostility and hatred as persist have been brought within the service of the nobler feelings. None of us succeed in doing this entirely; but we are truly free to the extent that we do so. He who is inhibited, emotionally imprisoned, has been unfortunate enough to establish in the deep places of his life hatreds, hostilities, fears to which he cannot give expression because he is aware of their anti-social nature, because he knows that they will make trouble for him. Consequently he must keep them bottled up within himself, and they prevent such love and affection as he does experience from finding an adequate outlet. Emotional freedom is a disciplined freedom in which we have learned to love what we ought and to hate what we ought.

The Reverend Powell Davies, able Unitarian minister at Washington, D. C., has recently pointed out that there exists in principle no reason why the free mind concept or freedom of conscience should not permit an individual Unitarian to be an anti-Semite, a fanatical Fascist, a rabid imperialist, without transgressing the principles of his church. To my amazement I have discovered that there are persons who consider themselves Unitarians who are strongly pro-Nazi, and their sympathies in this war are not with the United Nations but with the Axis. Fortunately, they are few in number. Mr. Davies is right that our principle of freedom does not permit us to say them "nay," and this serves to emphasize all the more strongly the imperative we are under to stress the use that is made of freedom, and in particular the purpose we are seeking to serve, the goal we are striving to attain, by reference to which every conclusion advanced within our freedom must be tested. There is a supreme purpose in our religion which, as it seems to me, precludes the use of freedom to destroy freedom, precludes any use of freedom inconsistent with itself.

I should like to approach this over-arching purpose by means of the illustration employed by Mr. Herbert Hoover, though the use I make of it is my own and I will not hold him responsible for my conclusions. It is the analogy of the traffic signals. Many of us can remember the snarls into which traffic got itself in the days before the automatic stop-and-go signs were established. I was living in Los Angeles at the time, and I still have a very vivid recollection of the intersection of 8th and Figueroa Streets.

At the rush hour in the evening the cars would pour in helter-skelter, each driver bent on getting home as quickly as possible. One car would try to make a turn across the oncoming torrent and the first thing you knew there was a tie-up blocking all traffic, resulting in a wild honking of horns, a flare-up of tempers, and a delay of minutes before a traffic officer or some daring pedestrian took matters in hand, untied the knot, and sent the cars on their way once more.

Then the early traffic signals were installed: the kind that rang a bell and raised arms saying "go" or "stop." They provoked a lot of resentment at the outset; people complained that it was an interference with their freedom. Particularly when the pedestrians, too, were first required to obey the traffic signals, there was open rebellion. Numerous cases were reported of women slapping the face of a policeman when he required them to go back after they had crossed the street against the traffic. I am informed that there is one of our distinguished elder Unitarian clergymen who still refuses, when he drives a car, to pay any attention to the traffic signs. But the friends who ride with him wish that he were not quite so much of a "rugged individualist." Most of us gladly accept the discipline of the lights because we know that they serve the purpose of safeguarding us and expediting us on our way. It is astounding how many more cars can go through an intersection under the disciplined freedom of the stop-and-go signs than was the case when each driver was free to make his own decision. Like Paul, we say in this matter: "Though I am free, I bring myself under bondage, that I may gain the more."

But it is hard for us Americans to learn that we have to apply this principle to our social life. Our love of freedom is closely associated with an intense individualism which is the product of the rough and relatively simple conditions that prevailed in this country almost up to the present time. In a community where there are few cars you do not need traffic signals; the judgment of the individual drivers suffices for the most part. Only where the traffic is heavy do we install stop-and-go signs. Our social traffic has so recently become heavy and complicated that we are still in the stage of bitter resentment against the necessary attempts to regulate it. We at once raise the cry that our liberty is being destroyed; the policeman's face is red and smarting from the numerous slaps we have administered. I am thinking of the recent case of Montgomery Ward & Company.

Sometimes the protests are justified; by no means are all our efforts to direct the social, the business, and industrial traffic wise. There is a real danger here, and we shall do well to exercise that eternal vigilance which is the price of liberty. But there is the opposite

danger which is quite as great—that men shall raise the cry of liberty and use this precious watchword as a cloak for their own selfish interests. Failing to recognize the altered conditions, they may act like an irresponsible adolescent who drives through a red light at 45 miles an hour and crashes into another car, killing its occupants and endangering his own life. Clearly, in the complex and closely interdependent civilization which we are building, it is necessary for us to establish regulations designed to promote the common interests of all of us; clearly, as individuals, we shall have to discipline ourselves within our freedom to meet these requirements.

We shall doubtless make many mistakes, for we are undertaking a very difficult task. But if we keep our purpose clear we can learn by experience and correct our mistakes. Just as the stop-and-go signs are intended to expedite traffic and make it safe, so the regulations of the social and economic order are intended to promote the best interests of all of us and thereby provide the conditions in which each one can flourish. Whether or not any particular regulation is promoting the over-all human purpose is often very difficult to determine and there is much room for honest difference of opinion. But if we are actually seeking the common good, the tests of time and experience will point us the way. It is to this end that we must use our freedom.

The problem is not quite as recent as I have indicated; in one form or another it has doubtless always been present among men. I was forcibly reminded of this the other day when leafing through some old copies of *The Unitarian,* an excellent magazine published in Ann Arbor a full half century ago. In the issue of November, 1892, there was published a sermon on liberty and religion by the Reverend G. W. Buckley of Sturgis, Michigan. It contains a paragraph which I should like to share with you:

> The danger that I see, even for this fair land, is that our passion for liberty may be so poisoned by a selfish individualism that we may be drifted on the shoals of social revolution. We shall be jealous and watchful of our liberty; but let it be to the end that we may serve more wisely and faithfully our brother man, and enter into fuller harmony with the eternal and preservative spirit of this wonderful universe.

Evidently our predecessors were thinking deeply and in substantially the same terms on these matters as are we.

Of late there has been a rising chorus of demand that American business shall be freed from interference on the part of government in order that our characteristic "private enterprise" may continue its development. Within certain limits this is a legitimate demand, provided business intends to use the freedom which it is claiming for a purpose greater than that of piling up profits. Intelligent and socially-minded business men recognize that the function of business is to meet the needs of human beings, provide goods, services, and the major medium of expression for the lives of millions; and that profits, while necessary, are incidental to this. But there is always the danger that selfish interests will obscure and block the general good.

In Henry Seidel Canby's recent biography of Walt Whitman there is a passage which tells of the deep distress which the excessive materialism of America in the years just prior to the Civil War occasioned in the soul of the great poet. He saw that men of the commercial world were ready to connive at the spread of slavery, that indeed they were willing to let the Union break up rather than risk profits and prosperity. (They decried the idealism of the day as moonshine.) The moral judgment of the people overruled them; the Union was saved and slavery abolished. In the fateful post-war years that lie ahead of us private enterprise can justify the freedom which it rightfully claims only as it uses that freedom to promote the general health of our national and, indeed, our international life. To do this requires not merely business acumen but also profound moral insight.

The same is, of course, true of labor and of all the elements of our population. Labor is free to organize, not simply that it may improve the position of its members, though that looms as important to them as profits do to the employer; labor is free to organize so that it may most effectively use its powers to promote the best interests of society—the industry of which it is a part, and the public, as well as itself. The more socially-minded and intelligent labor leaders are coming to a recognition of this truth. Human life is increasingly being knit into one indivisible whole over the entire planet; the well-being of each is bound up with that of all. Every human being is responsible for using his cherished freedom in such wise that he contributes to the health and prosperity of the entire human family.

I shall, of course, be told that I am utterly unrealistic in appealing to men to take this larger view, that human nature is essentially selfish, and that self-interest must continue to furnish the motive power for most of the world's work. If there were an irreconcilable conflict between self-interest and community interest, the criticism would be valid. But certainly the most profound insight into human nature, the deepest of all religious truths, is that we are members one of another, that we are all one woof of the weaving and the one warp threads us through. In the long run, in the final analysis, it will be discovered that the worst failure to be realistic stems from blindness to this fact. He who tries to fatten at the expense of his neighbors is like a man who should decide that he will no longer let his blood stream course to his foot, and so draws a tight wire around his ankle. Some practices go to the extreme of a man drawing the noose around his neck to cut off the lifeblood to the head. To be sure, the unity of humanity is as yet but partial, and there are, as things stand today, genuine conflicts of interest, but the war itself is the clearest kind of proof that we are moving toward an ever greater degree of unity, and that the health of the world lays us under the imperative of promoting that unity by using our individual freedom in all the relations of life in the spirit demanded by the overwhelming fact that we are members one of another within the living body of humanity.

I have often felt that it would be a grand thing for us of the free churches to put these essential truths of our religion into the form of an oath of allegiance comparable to that which expresses our patriotic feeling, but on that universal level that is global in scope and takes in all mankind. With my personal version of such an oath I conclude: I pledge allegiance to the Great Society of Mankind which is growing in the life of the world. I will do all within my power to promote its unity. I will be loyal to its principle of freedom, using my own liberty intelligently and in a spirit of tolerance and good will toward my neighbors in all the earth. I will rise above the prejudices of race, class, and creed, and serve the cause of our common humanity by working for the fulfillment of the ideal of justice and equality for all.

Prerequisites of the New Religious Leader

LEO HIRSCH

Religious institutions of today show unmistable signs of decay, even disintegration, And yet, more than ever before, there exists today a deep need for the solace, comfort, and inspiration of religion to strengthen us in character and endurance.

Battle-scarred veterans, though young in years, so young in fact that in ordinary times they would be in college or just beginning a business career, they tell us of religion's need. How battle-tried men have learned that mere individualism plus service-discipline are insufficient moral armament when man is exposed to the hell of sinking ships, burning oil, exploding shells, or any of the fiendish composite of enemy deviltry and nature's trials! Something else was needed, our soldiers and sailors have found out. Religion, the backbone of humanity!

Not only has this revelation come to our own boys. The identical experience has been occurring among German troops. From Africa and Europe have come well-substantiated reports of enemy soldiers asking for a chaplain. Up to then they believed that Nazism embraced all there was of religion.

War has proved to the men who fight it that something more is needed than a sound body and adequate weapons. There are tortures of the heart and mind to be met, as well as bodily pain. The fighter must be well prepared ethically if he is to meet such tortures on even terms.

That our soldiers are not ethically prepared hardly needs to be proved. If the at-homes do not realize this, the soldiers and sailors surely do. All over the world they are questioning, wondering why the chaos of war persists. This writer has occasion to travel a great deal. In the past year he has used the opportunity thus afforded to talk to men in the armed forces, seeking to find out what they were thinking about. Conversations were had with 526 men in uniform, officers and men in the ranks. They were revealing, to say the least. Let me summarize the impressions I gained.

Twenty per cent had a clear conception and appreciation of the freedoms expressed in our Constitution and the Bill of Rights. They voiced their feeling of responsibility to defend and preserve these freedoms.

Thirty per cent felt we were pursuing a will-o'-the-wisp, as in 1917; that disillusionment would again follow; that nothing concrete would be gained. Nevertheless, they were willing to go along in the fight. Most of them had had bitter experience with unemployment during the depression.

Forty per cent had prejudices: either anti-Russian, anti-British, anti-Jewish, anti-Negro. In this larger group there was clearly evident the influence of authoritarian religion, also Fascist indoctrination.

Eight per cent had an extremely nebulous idea of what the war was about. Their formal education had been extremely limited. As for their own participation, they merely knew they had been drafted and had to fight.

Two per cent were aware that the religious and cultural foundations of an entire historic period were in process of disintegration. Only this small percentage could see the epochal nature of what was going on; that more than a fight between democratic ideals and totalitarian ideologies was at stake; that there was a-borning a new culture and religion to make possible the realization of a true democratic ideal.

Thus one may see how much ploughing there is yet to be done in order to stir men's minds toward the ethical ideal.

It is fair to ask: Why has ethical training not made greater progress? The answer might be that hitherto religious leaders have stressed dogmas, creeds, miracles, but have neglected the importance of systematic ethical training and its relation to the fields traversed by human beings. Too satisfied to follow ancient tradition and authority, religious leaders have failed to arouse the critical faculty of those they sought to lead. Thus where light was needed, and could have been had, only darkness reigned.

There must come the time when religious leaders will distinguish between true religion and sheer superstition. To acknowledge what is due the past is proper; but to freeze veneration into atrophy is no mark of faith any more than it is of learning.

To miscall superstition by the name of religion does not work a transformation. Superstition keeps truth from men, and thus separates them. When superstition proclaims that Divinity resides in one country, one church, one Bible, one people, one race, one man as the begotten Son of God, it proves nothing. Religion releases Divinity by proclaiming its universality; that it exists everywhere and with all and in all; and that all men are begotten of the Divine.

Superstition would confine God to a special place, confine Him to a little box or book or scroll, or to a single country or people. But religion is inconsistent with superstition; it smashes these idols and the idolatries accompanying them. It states that Divinity is in every person's heart; that he only needs to live accordingly. Whosoever translates religion of the heart into ethical conduct thus becomes a champion of religion. Since the beginning of time ethics has been the matrix out of which man has transmuted religion.

Unless the religious leader understands how to make his flock translate conduct into a high ethical standard, he is not going to have a flock. What does such competency on his part involve? Mainly it involves understanding, and that can only come to him if his training is much broader than it has been heretofore.

Consider his relation to those whom he would teach. They start with him as boys. A teacher can be like an engineer if he works with nature. A boy's life is like a spring welling up in a rolling plain. If the natural flow of that spring water is to be changed, it must be done by one who knows the ways of wandering streams. Likewise with teaching! It must be done in understanding. Boys do not reject guidance; on the contrary, they hunger for it. But they will not accept it unless the guide warrants their instinctive acceptance. Whoever would be a teacher of religion must know men. He must be able to realize their sufferings as well as their ambitions; he must know what it means to be unemployed and insecure. He must know all the problems which confront the average person, industrial ills as well as spiritual malfeasances. In a word, he will have to realize that today, now, we are face to face with revolution in scientific, economic, and religious thought.

Above all, he must understand that this revolution is much deeper than is ordinarily considered. It is not

merely a case of revolting against corporations or a quasi-business-Fascist psychology and control; it is a revolt of people who realize that political freedom is a mirage as long as economic dictatorship persists. Organized religion cannot live if it steps aside from the battle. It will have to take sides; no longer can its spokesmen retire behind a shield of ecclesiasticism.

Would you say that, if this were done, it would be a new religion? It would be new if the mass of clergymen came forth from behind their shield of ecclesiasticism, but there have been pioneers before now. Theodore Parker and Ralph Waldo Emerson were such. They were the real pioneers of the religion so much needed today. They found their real effectiveness when they gave up the traditional supports of churchly surroundings and took lay pulpits. Great audiences came to them when they denied the permanent necessity for the miraculous, denied its historical evidence, and thus anticipated the later positions of Huxley and Matthew Arnold. They personified the conflict of the individual vs. the state; science vs. tradition. They defined sacred mores, taboos, tradition. They spoke for a religion that was fresh, vivid, personal; free from formalities that obscure the real meaning of religion. They were the harbingers of the Ethical Movement founded by Felix Adler.

The time will come—it may be far off or it may be in the very near future—when Felix Adler will be recognized as the great prophet of the New Religion. His supreme ethical rule is transcendental as well as foundational. It lays the foundation stone of the structure which a new social order is certain to build. It is a landmark; spiritual, practical, all wise: "So act as to elicit the unique personality in others and thereby in thyself."

It must be noted that this advice is applicable to religious teachers as well as to those they would teach. And it is a fair question to ask whether the majority of teachers in religion have the understanding which would enable them to get their hearers to act according to such a high standard. Do they know enough? Not of what is in books, but of what is in the thoughts of men. Have they lived hardily enough to learn it?

Character alone is not enough equipment for a religious leader. Character and education are not enough. There also must be the inclusion of deep experience. The religious leader needs to have led the unsheltered life of the average man. In ancient days religious teachers could influence the common man, because they were like him in thought and deed. Jesus and St. Paul knew what it meant to work with one's hands. There was no gulf separating them from those whom they sought to lead.

The religious leader of today, if he would be a leader, if religion is to progress, will have to have a dependence other than the generous bounty of those to whom he preaches. He needs the independence thus to be gained; he needs the honesty in thought and manner which can only derive from independence. He needs to share the fears of the average man; the fears and lack of privilege which go under the label of insecurity. Unless the training schools for ministers take account of this need, unless they require before ordination that their candidates learn through experience what nearly all men go through, then, assuredly, the training schools will falter and disappear, and likewise the ministers and eventually organized religion as it now exists.

A simple example points this fact. Father Damien could not convince the lepers on the Island of Molokai of his religious faith and principles until he himself became a leper. To be a Doctor of Divinity is but to have a title. To be a Teacher in Humanity is to have a mission. True religion is humanity.

A religious leader who has gained an actual knowledge above a bookish knowledge of life will be able to apply his mind and heart to the problems of life.

A religious leader with such experiential background, knowing at first hand the many problems of our political, economic, and religious activities, will stand fearlessly for the rights of the laboring man and yet will be equally fearless in his attack on and denunciation of any kind of mob violence; exactly as he will unsparingly assail every corrupt politician and yet avoid the pit of mere slanderous accusation against all men in public life. In his private character, he will combine a good-natured evenness of temper with the power of flaming wrath against unrighteousness, insistence upon adherence to a high ideal with ready recognition of the need of practical methods in the achievement of that ideal, and a serene and lofty hopefulness and belief in the future, with a keen sensitivity to all that is low, base, cruel, evil and therefore mercilessly to be warred against in the present. Not a person who talks down to people but one employing a method of explanation to give to others the fruits of his reason and experience—a serene, tranquil, courteous, fair-minded leader.

Above all, a religious leader must be the servant of a great ideal, he must have but one thought in his mind and one passion in his heart—to run without ceasing, not only with the light but toward it; for the race is for the night only, and the torch-bearers know that they face the morning and are its forerunners. He must give up what other men prize that he may help them see where lie the real prizes and lead the way to them. When he takes the light of truth in his hand, the consecration must take place in his spirit, and the joy must come from driving back the night and passing on the light to others, making life radiant with hope and peace and rest. If organized religion is to survive, it must have leaders to whom idealism is a sacred goal. Only such leaders can kindle in most of us the fire of enthusiasm which would turn us into followers. Such idealism is not based on dogmas, creeds, or abstractions. It can derive only from human experience and must aim at brotherhood. Such idealism outlines the road to triumph for the principles of man's inner urging—his soul.

Religion, as all else, eventually comes up for judgment. It must contribute to the release in man of the spark of divinity that resides in every human soul, as it "makes apparent what as yet is unapparent." That is what religion is: a stirring in man of the moral forces that make possible the triumph of what is good, beautiful, and true.

Obviously, the furtherance of religion is dependent on the leaders in religion. Their impingement on the progress of religion depends on how understanding they can make themselves. We have seen that their life has been too far from the beaten path. They must again travel the road most people travel, do it in the same manner as their prototypes of some thousands of years ago.

Another important function of the new religious leader or social scientist must be to combat ignorance, prejudice, bigotry, intolerance, and dogmatism, just as the scientists in the medical field are combating cancer,

smallpox, malaria, typhus, and diphtheria. He must become expert in the social sciences, anthropology, psychology, sociology, economics, ethics, and, by the knowledge these sciences afford and the facts they reveal to him, he will be able to *think through* some of the difficult social problems, abandon some of the old explanations, and adopt a more enlightened religion consistent with modern knowledge and more suitable for modern men.

These social sciences still further enable our religious leaders to combat the anti-intellectualism of our day, with its fear of ideas and the hate toward men who have ideas, and thus will be able to stem the retreat from reason which the Fascists have so cleverly exploited. They will thus be enabled to penetrate into the causes of the present world crisis and also find a remedy for the disintegration of our Western culture. By ascertaining the true causes of the present tragedy they will be able to direct the masses of men to think right and understand that the elimination of the evils cannot be achieved by merely prescribing an economic readjustment—in money and banking, in prices and wages, in social security and insurance against unemployment, or the elimination of private property or the replacement by democracy of the totalitarian state. They will clearly state that some of these measures, when properly applied, can produce minor improvements but are no remedy. They will fearlessly point out that the change can only be wrought by a complete change of our contemporary mentality and attitudes, a basic transformation of our system of values, and a complete reorientation of our conduct toward our fellowmen and cultural values. It is only by these means that the world of true reality and value can be realized and expanded, and man can again become a precious, worthwhile personality. We need a new mentality, a new ethical insight, a new patriotism, and when these are achieved then there will easily result a new industry and a new economic system based on right human relations.

When such religious leadership is at hand, there will be no need to advertise for attendance in houses of worship. Pews will be filled because people will want to attend religious service. No cajoling, no threatening will be necessary. The reason for the numerous empty seats today is that religion is ill and its spokesmen are insufficiently inspired, not well enough educated, or, most probably, too inexperienced to speak the common language. Like men or institutions, religion will get better or die. Let us hope it gets better. Its only chance is to have the right kind of teachers, and they can only be developed by superimposing their teacher training on an experience that falls to the great majority.

With leaders of such a type, religion will blossom into a majestic force and man will come into his destiny.

Human Nature: Stumbling Block or Salvation?

STANTON A. COBLENTZ

Whenever men begin to discuss the possibility of a future "nearer to the heart's desire," some chilling voice usually replies: "It's a glorious dream, but you can't change human nature!" And this verdict is likely to be taken as final, whether the subject under discussion be a more equitable social order, a better balanced international regime, or the abolition of warfare. For the term "human nature" is one of the modern fetishes, and the idea of its sovereign and unalterable powers has taken so firm a hold of our thinking that it has become a pitfall in the way of reform and a barrier against all seekers of a wiser and more humane world.

Is it not therefore time to re-examine the premises behind this conception? Does human nature actually forbid all idealistic consummations, and even such an eminently practical attainment as an earth in which none will be stalked by want, and in which the nations will not rip at one another like famished wolves? One can answer "Yes!" only on the basis of faulty knowledge and still more faulty definitions. Precisely what do we mean when we refer glibly and positively to "human nature"? To be consistent, must not this term embrace all those qualities that are basic and essential, just as the duck's tendency to take to water or the eagle's inclination to fly may be said to be basic and essential? And must it not leave out of account all secondary and dispensable qualities, such as a dog's ability to learn tricks or a parrot's tendency to ape its master's voice? Human nature, in a word, may be said to embrace the inherent, the permanent parts of man; but it has nothing to do with those qualities that appear in some individuals and not in others, or with those characteristics that spring from training or environment. And it is precisely here, as a little observation will make evident, that the apostles of the creed of human nature go furthest astray.

What they do, almost invariably, is to confuse the acquired and eradicable qualities of man with the innate and irremovable ones. They observe how greedy millions are shoving and trampling their fellows—and they conclude that it is man's nature to shove and trample the weak. They observe that man is engaged in fratricidal wars, and that war has existed throughout the centuries of recorded history—and they decide that man's nature requires warfare. They witness the struggle of social class with social class, extending across many generations and lands—and they feel safe in asserting that this too is a product of human nature. That there have been exceptions to the rule—periods in which warfare has not predominated, eras not governed by the greed of man against man or the strife of classes—is overlooked amid the urge to generalized conclusions. Nevertheless, the exceptions must be regarded as all-significant. There has never, for example, been an age or land in which men and women did not seek to mate, or in which mothers did not care for their children, or in which loud unexplained noises did not cause fright; for here we have something that does belong to human nature. But greed and pugnacity—which are felt by Joe and Jim but not by Frank or Mary—are variable qualities, malleable by circumstance and training; even though it is such qualities that are seized upon by the theorists who impose the stumbling block of "human nature" in the way of vital reforms.

Let us make the case more specific. What is known as "the instinct of self-preservation" is assuredly a part

of human nature, for the will to continue in existence is implanted in all breathing things. And this so-called instinct, when man was just coming down from the trees, may have manifested itself on occasion in growls and unbared teeth. The observer, therefore, might have concluded that growls and unbared teeth were inevitable products of human nature. Several ages later, however, such manifestations were no longer in style, although the urge to self-preservation remained as keen as ever; but meanwhile man had developed a social system which required the acquisition of certain little counters called credits if an individual was to survive or was to acquire comfort or position. Hence, although the teeth remained discreetly covered, private individuals competed greedily for the accumulation of the little counters. And observers, accordingly, considered greed a part of human nature. What they overlooked was that in itself it was no more connected with human nature than were the growls and unbared teeth of the aborigine; it was an indirect manifestation of the will to survive, and took its particular form through no necessity of human nature, but because the social system had brought it forth. In other words, it was no more unchangeable than the social system itself, even though, paradoxically, it was used as an excuse to keep the social system unaltered.

Even a cursory glance at the facts of history and anthropology will show that many qualities attributed to human nature cannot be inherent, since they have not always existed; we have mistaken the mere results of men's training for their inborn characteristics. "Man is by nature a warring creature!" we proclaim. Then how does it happen that no evidence of warfare has been found in the cave drawings or other relics of the Old Stone Age, and that peoples such as the Eskimos, the natives of Patagonia, the Veddahs of Ceylon and other primitive groups—groups below the stage of agriculture—have been found to be without intertribal conflict? "Man is by nature grasping and greedy!" we maintain. Then how (merely to offer one or two examples out of many) was it possible for the Incas of Peru to establish a socialistic regime that flourished without any approach to the profit motive? And how, likewise, could the seventeenth century Jesuits in Paraguay create a successful patriarchal system, which throve for generations until destroyed by a blast of warfare from without? "Man is by nature devoted to the idea of nation and Fatherland!" we assert. Then how can it be that allegiance to the particular country, in our present nationalistic sense of the term, was hardly known at all in early modern times, and much less during the Middle Ages? Is it not the truth that in all these cases we are referring not to what is inborn in man, but to what has been drilled into him? It is impossible to suppose, for example, that an adult modern American could make a good citizen of Peru under the Inca Tupac Yupanqui, leading a neatly regimented life without the thought of acquisition, while the State picked his dwelling place, his occupation, his very wife. Nor is there any reason to imagine that one of the professional soldiers of Germany or Japan, if by some magic he could be introduced into the simple communities of the Greenland Eskimos, would fit easily into the pacifistic life of the tribesmen; nor, conversely, can we believe that a medieval Frank or Saxon cast into the modern world could readily accept the idea of risking all for immense non-religious political entities such as England, Germany, or Russia.

But in none of these cases are we dealing with human nature, except in the indirect sense that men take on stubborn, apparently immutable, habits of mind, thanks to training and example. Why could not a modern American fit into the life of ancient Peru, or a Japanese or German warrior adapt himself to the peaceable methods of the Greenlanders? Not because by nature the American is fundamentally different from the Peruvian, or the German or Japanese fundamentally alien to the Eskimo; but because the mind of the American has been artificially set in a different groove from that of the Eskimo by the shape and texture of the society about him no less than by actual indoctrination. All that anthropologists have told us about the races of man—and all observations of how the second and third generations of foreigners mix in the "melting pot" despite diverse origins and native traditions—indicate that an average child of any group, if taken young enough, can be adapted to the habits of life and thought of any other group. Have not white children, captured by the Indians, grown up to be like full-blooded red men?

Moreover, has the truth about human nature not been recognized in practice by many powerful groups? Has the Church not traditionally sought to inculcate its doctrines early into the disciple? Do the Tibetans not seek their new Lama in an infant, whose whole life they mould—quite successfully, it is said—into the contours of the high office he is to fill? Has Hitler not seized upon the Nazi youths as the chief carriers of his fanatical creed, and deliberately shaped them as agents of terror and violence? Did Mussolini likewise not concentrate upon children and youths? And was the same principle not recognized as early as Spartan times, when the State took charge of the young and developed such a military psychology that militarism might have seemed a part of Spartan nature? In all these cases, and in scores of others familiar to every student of history, the ruling powers have taken advantage not of the fact that the nature of man is in most respects rigid, pre-ordained, and unalterable, but that on the contrary it is in most respects pliable and yielding. Indeed, if the manipulator will not enter into conflict with the really fundamental impulses such as the sex urge and the will to exist, he will find this so-called human nature to be but putty, capable of being sculptured into almost any desired shape.

And herein is a fact of intense significance. Herein is a reason either for hope or despair, depending upon what forces are to gain control; herein is a truth that can be utilized by the apostles of bloodshed in scattering fresh devastation, or by the architects of a better tomorrow in erecting the domes and towers of brotherhood and peace. Either consummation is possible within the boundaries of the thing we call "human nature"; but once we have recognized this fact, we will have uprooted one of the most deadly obstacles in the way of rational evolution. If we understand that man does not necessarily wage war, any more than he necessarily hangs or burns witches; if we are convinced that he does not inevitably squeeze his neighbor's neck in the scramble for wealth, any more than he inevitably devours the hearts of alien tribesmen in religious rites; if we realize that many of the worst traits and the most atrocious crimes charged against human nature are really the fruits of human traditions and society, we will be in a position to turn confidently to the shaping of the future. On the other hand, we will realize that present concepts and methods of thought

have been deeply implanted by modern schooling and custom and by the current philosophy; and that no mere change in political forms or methods will suffice unless we undertake a thorough overhauling of the human mind—a renovation of those traditions and of that attitude toward life which result in the traits generally mistaken for "human nature."

This means that, just as definitely as the Nazis have trained their followers for racial hatred and war or as the Church has trained its novitiates for the religious life, the modern world must train its youth for an orderly and peaceable existence within the nations and among the social classes. Not only by indoctrination in the schools and colleges of all lands, but by the actual reform of the social system so that the thrust of the successful greedy no longer constitutes an alluring example, we must prepare the way for the predominance of the generous rather than of the predatory possibilities within the mind of man. This would seem like an immense order, as indeed it is; but nothing short of an immense order is required to save the situation in a world wherein man's most noxious potentialities have been fostered and lifted to the plane of apparent "human nature," whereas his gentler and more humane tendencies have been mostly obliterated. Just what detailed steps must be taken, is a question far beyond the scope of any one article; but if the proper training of the mind of youth is indeed undertaken, and if the pernicious examples of the present are eliminated or sufficiently reduced, the "human nature" of tomorrow may turn out to be a constructive thing without apparent relationship to the self-centered and devastating forces of today.

The Study Table

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

My Lives in Russia. *By Markoosha Fischer. New York: Harper & Brothers. 269 pp. $2.75.*

This is the most important book that has been written on Russia in a long time. It is important, in a permanent historic sense, because it is honest, uninfluenced by prejudice or "party line"; and also because it springs from a wealth of direct first-hand information. It is authoritative both from a scholarly and spiritual point of view.

The author is the wife of the famous and greatly admired journalist, Louis Fischer, and is herself a Russian. Born in Russia in the days of the Tsar, she lived there, with intervals of study abroad, until the fall of 1915, when she was unable to endure longer "the indignities to which czarist oppression and absolutism subjected the people." She returned to Russia in 1922, full of an almost ecstatic enthusiasm for the revolution. In this year she married her husband, and in 1923 and 1924 her two boys, Yura and Vitya, were born. After service of Russia in Berlin and elsewhere, she returned to Moscow in 1927, and there remained for a period of twelve years, until 1939, when she left her native land "with great pain in [her] heart."

Her book, written also "with great pain," is the story of her life in Russia, primarily during those twelve successive years—the experiences of daily life, the pressing problems of domestic economy in a revolutionary country, the rearing of her children, her friends and neighbors, her contacts with distinguished and important figures in Soviet official life, and, above all, the passing phases of the history which she saw unfolding before her face and eyes. The story, she says, "is a story of hopes and joys . . . also a story of shattered hopes and hardships and sorrows." Mrs. Fischer is one of those who had the tragic experience of seeing the light of her life extinguished in Russia by the Stalin tyranny. She was too intelligent not to know what was going on, and too honest with herself and others not to confess it. She still has unbounded faith in the Russian people, and mingled admiration and compassion for their part in this war against the Hitler regime. But she sees in Stalin's rule a regime of the same terroristic character from which Russia and the world alike must be delivered, if liberty is to be recovered for mankind. In writing her book, she says, she had no desire "to discredit a brave ally . . . or give comfort to the enemy." But she insists that "nothing but the truth about Russia can restore honest, clear thinking about that country and give us an understanding of Russia's role in the future." There are "good aspects of Russian life," of course; but "there are also suppression of freedom, regimentation of spirit, and political terror. In planning and working for a new world, [we] must be aware of the danger of trying to achieve quick material gains only to neglect what is at least as important—spiritual and moral values."

Mrs. Fischer's story divides itself naturally into two parts—the first half of the 1927-1939 period when hardships were many and hopes were high, and the second half of this same period when the Stalin terror engulfed the land in darkness. Her account of the purges is a thing to stop the heart. Everywhere her friends were disappearing as the G. P. U. carried on its dreadful work. Nobody dared to complain or protest, least of all resist. The terror had come, and it worked a fearful havoc. The idea that any of these accused and killed, unnumbered thousands of them, were guilty of sabotage or treason, is to her preposterous. She scoffs at the suggestion of a Fifth Column. These were old revolutionists who were being slaughtered—faithful servants and champions of the cause through many years. Mrs. Fischer knew them as she knew herself, and trusted them as she trusted her own soul. What was happening was plain. Stalin, ignorant, brutal, power-crazed, was engaged in liquidating the revolution in his own interest, and of course he had to liquidate all those who still believed in it. Not otherwise could Stalin be secure. So the dreadful work went on! Worse, if possible, than the actual bloodshed was the cowing of a whole people—the regimentation of all thought and the subjection of all free spirit. Perhaps it was because Mrs. Fischer had lived under the Tsars that she was able to recognize when the wheel had swung back full circle.

In 1939 Mrs. Fischer left Russia. She could stand

suffocation and torture no longer! The Soviet-Nazi pact of August 23, 1939, came to confirm the worst of her fears. "A hammer blow on my head would have been more merciful," she writes. "For weeks after the war began, I would wake up in the middle of the night hoping that it was all a horrible nightmare; that there was no war; that Stalin had never smiled at Ribbentrop; that Molotov had not assured Hitler of the strength of the blood ties between Germany and Russia." The entrance of Russia into the war in 1941, when attacked by Hitler, did not "change [her] attitude to the Soviet dictatorship." She writes that her "desire for Russia's victory and [her] feelings for the Russians' sufferings are great . . . but [her] mind refuses to justify today what [she] considered wrong in Russia before Hitler's attack. [She] cannot because of this attack justify dictatorship today."

And so the curtain falls. There is a great future for Russia. But only if she regains her liberty.

* * * *

BEYOND THE SUNSET. *By William O. Stevens. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 119 pp. $1.50.*

This little book is a kind of introduction to the field of psychical research. Its theme is communication with the dead, in the reality of which the author believes as a hypothesis now scientifically demonstrated. He states that he has not written and presented his book "as any demonstration that will convince the sceptic. They [the pages] are intended merely to answer the cry, 'give us the facts,' by indicating that there is a great store of facts, and of many kinds, if one is sufficiently interested to investigate them with an open mind." Here is what has happened, he says! In the face of such experiences, tested and verified, "it is hard to understand why any intellectual person should keep his eyes shut."

In summarizing his argument, the author says, on page 99:

> If the foregoing pages have served their purpose, they have shown that there is a field of human experience that lies beyond the normal and also outside any human laws of nature. A materialistic and mechanistic world, unable to explain it, therefore denies its existence. However . . . certain thoughtful men and women, by means of a long and painstaking series of investigations, have collected and published a mass of evidence to prove that this supernormal type of experience does exist. . . . A great part of this evidence points to the survival of personality after death. Indeed, the conclusion seems so obvious that many who investigated psychic phenomena merely out of curiosity were won over by the facts, usually against their will, to a belief in the life to come.

Mr. Stevens' book is a statement, analysis, and interpretation of these "facts" pointing to communication with the dead. It is the simplest, fairest, and most persuasive presentation of the case I have ever seen. If anyone desires to look into this enormously interesting and important field, he cannot do better than start with this volume. Mr. Stevens writes as a convinced advocate of the hypothesis of survival after death as proved by communication with the dead, but he shows not a trace of dogmatism in his argument. He is as fair-minded and objective as though he had no stake in the issue at all. Yet the dedication of this book seems to indicate that he has lost a son in this war, and would bring to others similarly stricken the assurance he feels of immortality. Mr. Stevens' own standing as author and educator lends weight to his argument.

One trivial error!—the repeated misspelling of Alfred Russel Wallace's middle name as "Russell." This should be corrected in future editions of the book.

* * * *

THE GIST. *Edited, with a Foreword, by Valerie H. Riggs. Published at 21 Coolidge Hill Road, Cambridge, Mass. 130 pp. 25 cents; five copies, $1.00.*

This paper-covered pamphlet of the same size and style as the familiar *Readers' Digest,* is sponsored by the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the National Council for Prevention of War. It is altogether the most stirring piece of pacifist literature that we have seen in a long time. Yet it contains non-pacifist as well as pacifist authors, isolationists as well as internationalists, Christians and non-Christians, ancients and moderns, Quakers, Pope Pius XII, the President, and Senator Nye.

The booklet is an anthology of material "all bearing on the one subject—Peace." Articles sometimes five or six pages long are interspersed with quotations of a line or two. The oldest name encountered is Aristophanes (400 B. C.); the most recent, perhaps, Pierre van Paassen or Clifton Fadiman. Among the many contributors are Gandhi, Tolstoi, Rabindranath Tagore, Henry David Thoreau, Dean Inge, H. G. Wells, Randolph Bourne, Arthur Ponsonby, Jeannette Rankin, Norman Thomas, Vera Brittain, and many others. It is a rich collection, a treasure house of propaganda against war, a veritable arsenal of rational and spiritual weapons in the great fight for peace.

The work of selection has been admirably done. The classification of material constitutes a superb piece of critical analysis. The editing throughout is first-class. Armed with this pamphlet, the pacifist need never dread questions or fear controversy.

Mrs. Riggs writes me that "this is not a new current magazine, but merely this one issue." I count this regrettable, for one good issue of this kind deserves another. Whether Mrs. Riggs can make a second volume as fine as the first, I do not know. But she owes it to us all to try. Meanwhile, sincere thanks for what we have!

The Cock Will Crow

The crowing cock gives forth no sound
And men are cringed beneath their roofs.
While some are creeping underground,
Since war lords stamp the earth with hoofs.
Indulging every fancied whim,
They spare no man his mind or limb.

Their time is brief for puff and stride,
They gloat on temporary gain—
And strip and wound the hollow eyed,
Then scorch their land, inflict a reign
Of cowardice and guile, and sow
The seeds of hatred as they go.

But forces now are well supplied,
To free the captives pained from stings
Of lust and greed unsatisfied.
And with new dawn each bell that rings
Will carry peace, so all may know
That suns will rise, the cock will crow.

CORDRAY MAXWELL.

Western Unitarian Conference

RANDALL S. HILTON, Executive Secretary
700 Oakwood Boulevard, Chicago, 15, Illinois

UNITARIAN ADVANCE

One of the glaring facts about the Unitarian Movement is how little it is known. In his travels the Secretary is constantly having to explain it to people who have never heard of it. It is our hope that soon there will be an aggressive Public Relations Division of the American Unitarian Association which will utilize all the possible means of making people conscious of the fact that there are Unitarians and a Unitarian Movement. The first steps are now being taken to that end. It is to be hoped that in the not too distant future the first sentence of this paragraph will no longer be true.

Of course, having people know about Unitarians is not enough. Our local churches must be ready and willing to take advantage of such knowledge. Each of our churches should begin now setting up an active publicity committee. Plans for coordinating the work of this committee with that of the membership and fellowship committees should be started. It is hoped that every church in the Western Conference will be ready to take full advantage of a continent-wide Advance program. Active churches who are doing things and who are alert to opportunities will find this Advance program most beneficial.

UNITARIAN CHURCH OF THE LARGER FELLOWSHIP

The Secretary has sent in the names of four families as possible members of this group. How many Unitarians do you know who live in communities where there are no Unitarian churches? Send their names to Dr. Albert C. Dieffenbach, 25 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Massachusetts.

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

We are happy to announce that All Souls' Unitarian Church of Colorado Springs, Colorado, has become a member of the Western Unitarian Conference. A cordial welcome is extended to the church and its minister, the Rev. Hurley B. Begun. The church is located at the corner of North Tejon and Dale Streets. Visitors to Colorado Springs are urged also to visit the services of this church.

CHURCHES AND MINISTERS

Ohio

Toledo—Arthur W. Olsen.
Dayton—Harold P. Marley.
Cincinnati, First Church—Melvin L. Welke.
Cincinnati, St. John's—Julius F. Krolfifer.

Kentucky

Louisville, First Church—Maynard Van Dyke.
Louisville, Clifton—G. Theodore Hempelmann.

Michigan

Ann Arbor—Edward H. Redman.
Detroit—Tracy M. Pullman.
Flint—Harold Scott.
Grosse Pointe—Merrill O. Bates.
Jackson—(No services).
Kalamazoo—Edwin C. Palmer.

Indiana

Fort Wayne—Robert S. Hoagland.
Hobart—Robert H. Holmes.
Indianapolis—E. Burdette Backus.

Illinois

Alton—John G. Gill.
Bloomington—Gerald F. Weary.
Chicago, First—Leslie T. Pennington.
Chicago, Third—Edwin T. Buehrer.
Chicago, Beverly—Jack Mendelssohn.
Chicago, People's—Preston Bradley.
Chicago, People's Liberal—(Candidates).
Chicago, Unity—John R. Heyworth.
Evanston—John N. Booth.
Geneseo—Monthly services.
Geneva—Charles H. Lyttle.
Hinsdale—Robert S. Turner.
Moline—(Occasional services).
Quincy—Robert M. Pratt.
Rockford—G. Richard Kuch.
Shelbyville—Nathaniel Lauriat.
Urbana—Philip Schug.

Wisconsin

Madison—Kenneth L. Patton.
Milwaukee—Ralph E. Bailey.

Minnesota

Angora—Milma S. Lappala.
Duluth—John Malick.
Hanska—George Walen.
Minneapolis—Raymond B. Bragg.
St. Paul—(Candidates).
Underwood—(Occasional services).
Virginia—No minister.
Willmar—No minister.

Missouri

Kansas City—R. Lester Mondale.
St. Louis—Laurance R. Plank.

Iowa

Cedar Rapids—Waldemar Argow, Jr.
Davenport—Charles E. Snyder.
Des Moines—Grant Butler.
Iowa City—Evans Worthley.
Keokuk—(Closed for Duration).
Sioux City—Francis M. Ruland.

Nebraska

Lincoln—Carl A. Storm.
Omaha—John W. Cyrus.

Kansas

Lawrence—(No minister).
Topeka—Paul J. Bockoven.
Wichita—W. Rupert Holloway.

Colorado

Colorado Springs—Hurley B. Begun.
Denver—Jacob Trapp.
Fort Collins—Harold W. Wright.

BOOKS

Two books concerned with the Post-War world, which are well worth reading are: *On Living in a Revolution,* by Julian Huxley, and *The Practice of Idealism,* by Alfred M. Bingham.

Order all your non-fiction books through
THE WESTERN UNITARIAN CONFERENCE